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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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Atsuhiko Kawamoto

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EXAMINER

JENNISON, BRIAN W

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/582,085	Applicant(s) KAWAMOTO ET AL.	
	Examiner BRIAN JENNISON	Art Unit 3742	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 08 June 2006 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____. |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>6/8/2006</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____. |

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1-6, 14-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Stava (US 6,501,049).

Stava teaches:

Regarding Claim 1: Fig 1 shows a pulse arc welding method with a current peak shown in Fig 3 at 124 and a base before time 102. **See Column 5, Lines 24-40.**

A short is detected at time 102 between the molten ball and base material. A current gradient is applied at time 110a in Fig 3. 110c shows the current decreasing on detecting a neck before short circuit recovery. **See Column 5, Lines 24-40.**

Regarding Claim 2: Fig 3 shows the current increased at 122 after the neck and after the current has been decreased at 110c.

Regarding Claims 3 and 14: Fig 3 shows the current decreasing at 102 when the short circuit begins and the gradient would be smaller than the gradient at the pulse rise **See Column 5, Lines 30-50 and Column 4, Lines 40-45.**

Art Unit: 3742

Regarding Claims 4-5 and 15-16: The length of time elapsed from the short circuit is easily obtained. **See Column 4, Lines 50-55.** The gradient is controlled based on the time elapsed since the gradient will increase more as the elapsed time increases since the current is being increased during this time. **See Fig 3.** The greater the time elapsed the greater the gradient since the current is increased more as time progresses.

Regarding Claim 6: Fig 3 shows an output voltage being detected. The gradient between 110a and 110b is capable of being controlled based upon Vout.

Claim 7-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kawai (JP 01-266966) as cited by applicant. References made to machine translation of equivalent document JP 2563465

Kawai teaches:

Regarding Claim 7: Drawing 2 shows a pulse arc welding circuit with a switching element 17 which controls the current output. A welding current value detector 11 for control output current. A welding voltage value detector 12 for controlling output voltage. A short circuit decision circuit 13 judges if the welding state is in short circuit or arc period. Control circuit 14 defines a parameter. Pulse shape circuit 15 controls the pulse output. Control circuit 14 also controls the dip pulse of the waveform. **See Page 3.** Switch element 163 decreases and increases the current. **See page 7.** Driving circuit 18.

Regarding Claims 8 and 9: The switching element 163 is capable of decreasing the current before the recovery from short circuit as shown in Fig 5. **See Page 7.**

Regarding Claims 10 and 11: The time is monitored in a section of the circuit by logic elements and is capable of controlling the gradient of the current. Fig 5 shows current Ia having an increase over a time period.

Regarding Claim 12: The output voltage is used for the pulse shape circuit part which can control the gradient. **See Page 5.**

Regarding Claim 13: Fig 5 shows a lower limit of the welding current.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. **Claims 17-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kawai in view of Stava (US 5,001,326).**

The teachings of Kawai have been discussed above.

Kawai fails to teach:

Regarding Claims 17: The pulse arc welding device wherein at an occurrence of a short circuit, the secondary control section sharply decreases welding current according to a signal from the arc short-circuit judging section.

Regarding Claim 18: The pulse arc welding device, wherein the setting section measures a length of time elapsed from occurrence of a short circuit according to the signal from the arc short-circuit judging section, and controls a gradient of a current waveform in a short-circuit condition with the length of time from the short-circuit occurrence.

Regarding Claim 19: The pulse arc welding device, wherein the setting section performs output control so as to apply steepness to the gradient of the current waveform in the short-circuit condition as the length of time from the short-circuit occurrence increases.

Regarding Claim 20: The pulse arc welding device wherein the setting section changes the gradient of the current waveform in the short-circuit condition according to the welding output voltage from the welding voltage value detector.

Art Unit: 3742

Regarding Claim 21: The pulse arc welding device wherein the setting section defines a lower limit of welding current when the welding current is sharply decreased.

Stava teaches:

Regarding Claim 17: Fig 4 shows the current sharply decreasing with the current controlled by a control circuit C1.

Regarding Claim 18: The time elapsed from T1 to T5 is measured. The gradient PP in Fig 4 depends on the elapsed time. **See Column 9, Lines 20-68.**

Regarding Claim 19: The feedback section controls the output.

Regarding Claim 20: The output voltage is measured and the gradient may be changed based on this value. **See Column 4, Lines 30-40.**

Regarding Claim 21: Fig 4 shows a lower limit before t_0 where the current is sharply decreased.

In view of Stava's teachings it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include the control circuit for sharply decreasing the current to initiate the short circuit period, the pinch pulse to provide current flow from

Art Unit: 3742

feedback to produce a current gradient, Using output voltage to change the gradient for providing feedback to the circuit to control the gradient.

Conclusion

5. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Stava (US 6,274,845; 6,215,100; 6,172,333; 6,160,241) teach a method and apparatus for pulse arc welding using a short circuit.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to BRIAN JENNISON whose telephone number is (571)270-5930. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th 7:00AM-5:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tu Hoang can be reached on 571-272-4780. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3742

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/BRIAN JENNISON/
Examiner, Art Unit 3742

5/18/2009

/TU B HOANG/

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3742